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665 701 with the real rank and uniform of general or perhaps even with that of marshal.

24
FAMILY BACKGROUND OF PERSONALITY IN SOVIET RUSSIA

I

PROMPTED by drives of destructive aggression and supported by the ideological traditions of Nihilism and Anarchism, the Bolsheviks were determined to destroy the family in order to have unchallenged control over the training of children and the molding of their personalities. Their view was that there was not much that they could do with the parents, but that "the children belonged to the Party." Such a trend of thought was supported also by an intense reaction of many people against the old patriarchal and despotic family pattern which existed in the Czardom. There was a strong desire on the part of many family members to liberate themselves from the old practices of parental and marital authority and discipline. It was in such an atmosphere that the Bolshevik Party at first introduced a series of decrees and measures which greatly facilitated the dissolution of family ties.[1]

The Bolsheviks, however, soon realized that the family could not be allowed to disintegrate without dire consequences for their regime which was bent upon rapid industrialization and militarization and was in great need of manpower. Also as a result of wars, famines and a growing number of broken families, there were hundreds of thousands of homeless and neglected children and aged people. Care for these proved too great a burden for an economy which had to use all its available resources primarily for state security and war preparedness. Thus instead of destroying the family the Bolsheviks decided to maintain it but to manipulate it so as to use it as an instrument

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of the new order. The family, therefore, as all other institutions of the Soviet society, was to be reconstructed and regimented in such a way as to best serve the purposes and the objectives of the new ruling class.

As a result of such a change in attitude and reversal of policy the Bolsheviks have introduced laws and decrees whose aim has been to impose mutual responsibilities and obligations on family members. The new laws have also favored "indissolubility" of marriage ties and encouraged large families. At the same time, however, the family has been placed under the guidance, control and overseeing of the Party and of the government authorities. In consequence of a series of laws and decrees, the Soviet family has been given the task of training children in discipline, in collective responsibility, in obedience to authorities and in faith in Bolshevism. Just as the Soviet school, the Soviet family has been given the task of helping to train willing toilers, zealous labor drivers and agitators, and fearless fighters for the cause of world Communism.[2]

Following the traditions of the Russian patriarchal family and in order to make the parents an instrument of the training of children in obedience to authorities, parents have been made legally responsible for the behavior of their children. Prosecution by civil and criminal law, administrative fines and prison terms[3] have been established against the parents whose children came into conflict with administrative regulations or existing laws. Just as in the Domostroi the parents are encouraged to be strict and non-indulgent, and to rely on frequent punishment as a means of correction; they are also encouraged to be authoritative and to keep a necessary distance from children so that their authority is not undermined by unnecessary intimacy. The parents have been given joint rights of discipline but subjected to government and Party control.[4]

This interference of the Party-state into the family relationships has been backed also by another law according to which parental rights have been subordinated to the interest of children. The "interests of children" are determined according to the Party interests and views; the court has been empowered to deprive the parents of their parental rights whenever the Party

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chooses to consider that the interests of the children have not been safeguarded.[5] In such cases parental rights might be lost for up to five years.[6] According to the Soviet educational philosophy it is expected that the parents will *rear* the children, but that the public organizations under the Party's supervision will instruct and supervise parents in the ways of *Communist upbringing* of children.[7]

The Party considers it to be its duty to arouse antagonism of children against parents when such action is necessary in the interest of the survival of the Soviet regime. As mentioned earlier, planned rift between fathers and sons was, for instance, employed to speed up the process of collectivization. Commissar of Agriculture Jakovlev, speaking before a Party congress on the struggle against the kulaks, stated that "In a number of cases, the children of the kulaks are made to revolt against their parents, and thus the kulak families are divided and the kulaks still more isolated." The Party has also been known to take advantage of family conflicts to encourage the children to spy on their parents and to denounce them to the political police:

> Russian parents had to be very careful of what they said in the presence of their own children, and even of how they disciplined their children. One boy, Pavlik Morosov, was built up as a hero among youth because he had denounced his father who was organizing resistance against the kolhoz. Great propaganda was made about this boy. A book was written about him. Actually he became a hero to most children.[8]

In times of political "purges" there were frequent notices in the Soviet papers in which the children of the parents who were politically persecuted publicly renounced their parents.[9] That was the only way they could escape the vengeance of a regime which had revived the tradition of family hostages and used it as an instrument of political conformity.

The Bolsheviks consider that since "one's way of life is a social matter . . . a matter of national policy,"[10] the Party has the right to interfere even in pre-marital and extra-marital sex relations, as well as in the relations between the spouses. "Young Communist organizations cannot remain neutral when the con-

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duct of its members in love and family life run counter to the ethics of Soviet Man."[11] The fundamental motivation behind this interference in love and sex life is political control. "Moral corruption brings political corruption,"[12] the Bolsheviks say. It is in accordance with such a line of thought that it is considered to be the duty of one to inform on his or her own spouse. Such behavior is especially expected of a Party member. Therefore "A prudent Russian today hesitates to confide in even his wife too fully."[13]

At the same time while the Soviet family laws and Soviet philosophy and practices tend to favor Party and government supervision of family relations and in some cases sharpen family conflicts, they also endeavor to enforce family discipline over children, and to strengthen the sense of mutual responsibility among family members. The Bolsheviks, however, do not encourage development of the sense of kinship loyalty which might go counter to the interests of the state. The Soviet family laws have broadened the concept of family to all ascending and descending lines and to brothers and sisters. In case any one of these relatives is needy or incapacitated, the others have the obligation of support.[14] Emphasis on family responsibility is manifested also in the provision of the law of 1926 which, contrary to the Russian traditions, abolished the principle of separate property of the spouses.[15]

In accordance with new policy, factual or non-registered marriage which earlier enjoyed state protection was denied that privilege and a decree in 1944 ruled that "only registered marriage confers the rights and obligations of spouses."[16] A decree of the same year ruled that divorce is allowed only in case the wish of one or even both parties who seek divorce coincides with the "government's recognition of necessity to dissolve marriage."[17] Moreover in order to make divorce proceeding prohibitive and marriage practically indissoluble, a long judicial procedure was established. In the course of this long procedure the parties must clarify the motives for divorce and bring witnesses. Also high divorce fees were introduced. And to facilitate state interference, no grounds for divorce were stated or specified in the decree.

However, the procedural instructions concerning this decree

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do specify the cases in which the state wishes to facilitate divorce and dissolve marriage. Such cases are for instance, "a court sentence depriving either spouse of his or her liberty for no less than three years," and "the absence with no news of either spouse."[18] In such cases the party seeking divorce is exempted from the payment of fees and also from the requirement that a public notice be put in the local newspaper. These provisions are in accordance with the principle of family hostages and the well known practice of the Soviet political police to persecute the families of political offenders. Divorce from such a person may in some cases rehabilitate one in the eyes of the Party. The police as a rule exert pressure on the spouses of political culprits or suspects to seek divorce, and the law provisions are such that the court may facilitate divorce in such cases.

The Bolshevik regime depends to a great extent upon the available large contingents of manpower for its armed forces and for its industrial enterprises whose labor efficiency is very low. In accordance with such needs a series of measures was introduced designed to encourage large families, such as strict laws against birth control, maternity leaves, safeguards for employed pregnant women, monthly cash payments for children, reduced fees in nurseries, advantages in income tax payments, medals, awards, citations, and titles for mothers bearing and raising a certain number of children.[19] At the same time special taxes were imposed upon bachelors, childless couples and couples with only one or two children. Also suits to establish paternity were abolished and an unmarried mother was given the option to accept a modest allowance or to place the child in a public institution where the state takes care of it.

The recognition on the part of the Bolshevik rulers of the significance of the family as an institution of early training of Soviet subjects in discipline, subordination to the group, and obedience to authorities is manifested in the inclusion of family legislation within the jurisdiction of the central government of the Soviet Union. The constitution of the Soviet Union itself was amended for this purpose in 1947.[20] Thus the trend of Soviet legislation in the matters of family relations in the course of over thirty years of Bolshevik rule tended to increase and

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strengthen the control of the Party over that fundamental social institution. This intent to completely subject the family to the Party's aims is expressed in Bolshevik ideological parlance as "the cultural-educational influence of the socialist state upon family relationships in the direction of strengthening socialist principles."[21]

II

Following Russian traditional attachment to the Mother Country, Soviet pedagogical principles demand that love for the *Rodina* should be emphasized in the training of children. Building on traditional mother-child attachment in the Russian family, the Party instructs teachers to point out to their pupils how Lenin was attached to his mother.[22] It also emphasizes the tender relations between Stalin and his mother. Teachers are told that this natural attachment of a child to his mother should be used as a means to instill in the child love for his Mother Country.[23]

At the same time in the school textbooks, in the daily press, in the speeches of Party leaders and all other means of mass communication, it is the Bolshevik Party that is represented to be the Mother of the Komsomols, Pioneers, and Octobrists, and the "mother of the Soviet people." The love for the Rodina is, therefore, interpreted as being conditioned by and subordinated to the primary duty of love for the Party or the Leader with whom the Party is identified. Hence, even when mother-attachment remains strong in a Soviet child, the attempt is made to transfer that attachment to the Party and to raise loyalty to the Leader and to the Party above loyalty to the country. Thus Party loyalty precedes both family and national loyalty in the Soviet educational philosophy. "Party is above everything else," the Bolsheviks say. And it is this loyalty to the Leader, Party or Cause which precedes all other loyalties that forms the core of Bolshevik internationalism and the basis of its world appeal, not unlike the appeal of a universal church.

Most children of elementary school age and a greater part of those on secondary school level belong to Party auxiliary organizations, the Octobrists, the Pioneers and the Komsomols. In the great variety of activities in which these organizations are ex-

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pected to help the Party "at all times," there is always a possibility of conflict between the demands of the Party and those of the family. Also, owing to a great shortage of manpower and a very low standard of living, most women, with the exception of those from the upper ruling strata, are forced to work long hours outside the home. Many of them have to engage in heavy physical labor. Such mothers are not only physically exhausted at the end of the day, but are often disillusioned, bitter, as well as critical of the system, a fact which is confirmed by a rather high percentage of women in convict labor camps. Such mothers cannot pay sufficient attention to their children.

At the same time great demands and responsibilities placed on parents in regard to the discipline of their children and the interference of the Party and the government in family affairs often causes harshness in treatment of children. Hence overstrictness as well as negligence of children is the result.[24] Such a situation favors both feelings of rejection and revolt, as well as extreme self-concern and destructive aggressiveness on a larger scale and in a more intense way than in the days of Czardom. And since the Soviet system of vigilance encourages family members to inform on one another, mutual suspicions, fears, and hostilities rooted in patriarchal traditions are greatly magnified. Training in self-confidence and trust, and in group attachment cannot thrive in such circumstances. But it is exactly self-concern, mistrust, and destructive aggression that are so instrumental in the perpetuation of the Bolshevik rule.

Unstable political and economic conditions, together with consequences of wars, depletion of rural areas of adult men, famines, convict labor camps to which millions of parents have been confined, have resulted in an unprecedented number of broken families and a growing number of neglected, illegitimate and delinquent children. A number of such children, especially orphans of war heroes, at the age of nine are sent to military schools. Many neglected and delinquent children at the age of 3 to 13 are sent to special homes for children which are in charge of the secret political police.[25] The increasing stress on internal vigilance, together with the pressing need of the political police to feed their vast economic enterprises with cheap

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and harder and to produce more for Socialist Motherland. Not infrequently the brigade leaders have to use physical force to make him get up early enough to work on collective property.

Yet in spite of such unfavorable circumstances, compared to city workers, the peasant might still be in a somewhat better position in regard to security and stability, attachment to his family, to his cottage, to his small plot of land, and to his village. For this reason he has been able to put up resistance against the Party and the government.[33] It is against these scanty remnants of emotional and economic security, of personal independence, of group solidarity and resistance that the Bolshevik rulers are campaigning; it is to eradicate this psychology of group intimacy and opposition that the Party had recently attempted to resettle the farmers and move them into concentrated and urbanized surroundings; the Bolsheviks are exerting all efforts to eradicate these "residues of kulak psychology" root and branch and to make the peasants as completely helpless, insecure and subdued to the Party will as they have done with the industrial and intellectual workers.

There is a considerable disproportion in sex ratio in Soviet rural areas. Owing to great casualties in wars it is estimated that at present there are about fifteen million more women than men in the Soviet Union. And due to the increasing need of manpower to maintain huge military forces and to feed the inefficient city industries, the Soviet leaders are constantly draining both male youths and adult men from the villages in the form of military and labor drafts. They are therefore increasingly relying for agricultural work on peasant women. Hence peasant villages and peasant families tend to be composed predominantly of women.

Here too a family structure with semi-matriarchal traits, similar to the Old-Slavonic family, is being formed. Though in such circumstances the number of illegitimate children is increasing, it is quite possible that the women, especially those who are traditionally strongly attached to their family, are exerting a moderating and softening influence on the personality of the peasant child. An indication of such possible differences in the psychological atmosphere of the city and the country is given in

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those accounts of Soviet life in which the gloomy appearance of the city populace is contrasted to the more optimistic outlook of the country folk.[34]

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DESTRUCTIVE AGGRESSION

I

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PROMPTED by extreme power-seeking and by deeply rooted mistrust of their own subjects, the Bolsheviks have built a monolithic Party-state system which differs in the degree of its rigidity and power concentration from all other systems of despotism, theocracy, military dictatorship, totalitarian and police state. In those autocratic political systems not all aspects of life are regimented. A certain limited degree of freedom is left at least in some spheres of personal and of group behavior. But the main difference between these systems and the Bolshevik regime is that while the former prohibits only those activities which have a direct negative bearing upon perpetuation of the system, the latter allows only such behavior as has a direct positive bearing upon the perpetuation of the ruling faction in power.

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In the Soviet society the ruling class is not content with mere passive acceptance of the Bolshevik rule. It demands of each subject a "positive attitude" toward the regime. In such a society there is necessarily a premium in terms of privileges and power for the activities in the fields of political organization and agitation, of vigilance and violence, as well as in the fields of labor-driving, economic management, and military preparedness, since it is in the main upon such activities that perpetuation of Bolshevism depends. In such a "prison and barracks society", it is the calculating and ambitious careerists and zealous devotees and watchdogs, specialists in conspiracy and violence who climb toward the top levels of the Soviet political and social pyramid where blind obedience, crouching servility, jockeying for positions and power, and advancing on the cadavers of one's associates become a matter of survival.